



## Press Clipping Article

**Title:** Farmers allowed to sell at both markets

**Date:** 07/06/2007

**Source:** [Lexington Herald-Leader](#)

**Writer:** Michelle Ku

**Lead:**

A compromise has been reached to allow members of Lexington's two farmers markets to sell their products at one or both this year.

### Article:

A compromise has been reached to allow members of Lexington's two farmers markets to sell their products at one or both this year.

The Lexington Farmers Market -- the Saturday market on Vine Street -- has agreed to suspend its controversial "non-compete" clause that prohibits members from selling at a rival market in south Lexington.

The non-compete clause became an issue in May when members of the 2-year-old Blue Grass Farmers' Market -- on Richmond Road in front of Pedal the Planet and Fastsigns -- pointed out that the city provides free space and other services on Vine Street for the Lexington Farmers Market.

They also contended that it was discriminatory for the Lexington market to allow its members to sell their products wherever they want -- at stands on their farms, at markets in other counties, wholesale to restaurants in Lexington -- except at the other farmers market in Fayette County.

In response to those concerns, the Urban County Council set up a task force to study the issue and quickly learned the city had larger problems because it does not have a contract allowing the Lexington market to use Vine Street at no cost.

The task force asked the Lexington market to suspend the non-compete clause for this growing season to give the city time to work out the other legal problems.

Last month, the board of the Lexington market agreed to do so for this year, said Jeff Dabbelt, market manager for the Lexington market.

That means that any members of the Lexington market who want to sell their products at the Blue Grass market can do so without fear of being kicked out of the Lexington market. If members of the Blue Grass market want to sell at the Lexington market they can do so after becoming an approved member of the Lexington market, Dabbelt said.

To become a member of the Lexington market, growers have to complete an application, be approved by the market's membership committee and pass a farm inspection.

Dabbelt said he does not know whether anyone has taken the opportunity to sell at the Blue Grass market or whether any Blue Grass members have applied to be a member of his market.

Yesterday, the task force began working on formalizing the city's relationship with the Lexington market and any other markets that want to operate on city property.

The task force members agreed the city should enter into a purchase-of-service agreement with any market that wants to use city property.

Items the agreement should address include liability issues; that growers should be from Kentucky; who would pay for water, electricity and solid-waste pickup; and that growers who participate in a market on city property, such as Vine Street, should be allowed to participate in any other markets of their choosing.

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Generated Date: 7/26/2007 10:39:11 AM